

August 9, 2024

The Right Honorable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A2

Via electronic mail: PM@pm.gc.ca

The Honourable Steven MacKinnon, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Labour and Seniors
Place du Portage Phase II
165 de l'Hôtel-de-Ville Street
Gatineau, Québec J8X 3X2

Via electronic mail: MinistrePT-LPMinister@labour-travail.gc.ca

The Honourable Pablo Rodriguez, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Transport and Quebec Lieutenant
330 Sparks Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N5

Via electronic mail: TC.MinisterofTransport-MinistredesTransports.TC@tc.gc.ca

Re: Potential Labour Disruption in Class I railways

Dear Prime Minister and Ministers:

We are writing to urge you to immediately intervene and do everything necessary to avert a disruption in Canada's Class I railways.

A concurrent or sequential work stoppage at both major railways will leave Canadians with access to fewer goods and products, driving up prices and exacerbating affordability challenges. A failure to act swiftly will also put the livelihoods of millions of workers in jeopardy.

A disruption to our railway system will have an immediate impact on thousands of businesses from coast to coast and to commuters in several major urban centres. All of Canada's ports, logistics and warehouse operators, and suppliers will be affected, while a prolonged stoppage will quickly lead to shortages of supplies for numerous industries, forcing businesses to suspend their operations and furlough their employees. Factoring in the millions of Canadian jobs that would be impacted, the magnitude of the disruption is daunting.

Our international reputation and relationship with our trading partners is also at stake. Canada's railways transport \$380 billion worth of goods annually – that's over \$1 billion each day – and account for half of the country's exports. A prolonged railway strike will also surely weaken Canada's negotiating position in advance of the renewal of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement in 2026. A loss of confidence from our most important trading partner would take years to repair.

The uncertainty around the potential of a nationwide rail strike has already forced businesses across the country to adjust their operations (see Appendix).

We are respectfully asking that you safeguard the well-being of Canadians and the country's reputation as a reliable trading partner by ensuring that a disruption to our national railway system does not occur.

To support this effort, we would like to propose a meeting with you and a select group of association leaders as soon as possible. This meeting would provide an opportunity to discuss our concerns in detail and to explore how we, Canada's business community, can support the government in preventing any potential disruption.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Abbotsford Chamber of Commerce	Alberta Food Processors Association
Alberta Chambers of Commerce	Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Assiniboia Chamber of Commerce	Association of Footwear + Apparel Canada
Atlantic Chamber of Commerce	BC Food & Beverage
Battlefords & District Chamber of Commerce	Beer Canada
Burlington Chamber of Commerce	British Columbia Construction Association
Cambridge Chamber of Commerce	British Columbia Trucking Association
Canadian Chamber of Commerce	Business Council of Canada
Cap-Acadie Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance
Chamber of Commerce Brantford-Brant	Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers
Chamber of Commerce for Greater Moncton	Canadian Association of Recycling Industries
Chetwynd Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Automobile Dealers Association
Cold Lake Regional Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Canola Growers Association
Consort & District Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Cattle Association
Fort Nelson & District Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Construction Association
Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Corrugated and Containerboard Association

Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Federation of Agriculture
Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Federation of Independent Business
Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Fluid Power Association
Hamilton Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Food Exporters Association
High River Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Franchise Association
London Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Fuels Association
Madoc & District Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Home Builders' Association
Manitoba Chambers of Commerce	Canadian International Freight Forwarders Association
Mississauga Board of Trade	Canadian Kitchen Cabinet Association
North Bay & District Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters
Port Hope & District Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Paint and Coatings Association
Prince George Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Pork Council
Quebec's Federation of Chambers of Commerce	Canadian Produce Marketing Association
Quinte West Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Rental Association
Sarnia Lambton Chamber of Commerce	Canadian Sugar Institute
Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce	Canola Council of Canada
Surrey Board of Trade	Chamber of Marine Commerce
Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce	Chemistry Industry Association of Canada
Tillsonburg District Chamber of Commerce	Conseil de la transformation alimentaire du Québec
Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce	Electro-Federation Canada
Truro & Colchester Chamber of Commerce	Fenestration Canada
Tumbler Ridge Chamber of Commerce	Fertilizer Canada
Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce	FETCO
Yorkton Chamber of Commerce	Food & Beverage Atlantic
	Food and Beverage Canada
	Food and Beverage Ontario
	Food & Beverage Manitoba
	Food, Health and Consumer Products of Canada
	Food Producers of Canada
	Forest Products Association of Canada
	Freight Management Association of Canada
	Global Automakers of Canada
	Global Cold Chain Alliance
	Grain Growers of Canada

Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association of Canada

I.E. Canada

Independent Contractors and Businesses
Association

Medtech Canada

Mining Association of Canada

National Maritime Group

Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario

New Car Dealers Association of B.C.

Ontario Craft Brewers

Pets Canada

Private Motor Truck Council of Canada

Pulse Canada

Quebec Employers Council

Quebec Hemp and Cannabis Industry Association

Responsible Distribution Canada

Retail Council of Canada

Shipping Federation of Canada

Southern Interior Construction Association

Truck Training School Association of Ontario

Western Canadian Shippers' Coalition

Western Grain Elevator Association

Wheat Growers Association

Wood Manufacturing Cluster of Ontario

Enclosure